

RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN EXPRESSED CURRICULUM PRIORITIES
AND ACTUAL PRACTICES AT SELECTED CHILDREN'S CENTERS
IN PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

By

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The purposes of this study were to ascertain the expressed curriculum priorities of selected Pinellas County, Florida, day nursery and nursery school directors; to determine the association between expressed curriculum priorities and daily activities at the centers; and to ascertain the differences between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills, as determined through interviews with the center directors and observations within classrooms for four-year-old children.

This exploratory field study was conducted with a random sample of ten day nurseries and ten nursery schools representing 44% of the children's centers in the north region of Pinellas County, Florida. Data were gathered with adaptations of the Director Interview Form and the Classroom Observation Instrument developed by the research staff of the Institute

For Development of Educational Activities for a 1973 study of early schooling in the United States.

According to Florida law, a day nursery is defined as a children's center which "provides shelter, food, rest, care, and training" for children aged two to six. A nursery school, however, is defined as a children's center which "offers an educational program of directed, organized play and training at the level of the child's growth and development" in addition to providing food, shelter, rest, and care. The law provided that schools which qualified as "nursery schools" would give greater attention to cognitive development than did those which were categorized as "day nurseries."

Directors of the two types of centers comprising the sample expressed remarkably similar curriculum priorities. Both day nursery and nursery school directors accorded highest priority to affective areas, medium-range priority to motor areas, and lowest priority to cognitive areas. It was found that no significant differences existed between the ranked priorities of day nursery and nursery school directors ($t(18) = +2.101, p < .05$). Both day nursery and nursery school directors expressed curriculum priorities that significantly associated with actual daily occurrences at their centers (day nurseries: $r = .738; t = 5.28; p < .05$; nursery schools: $r = .789; t = 6.14; p < .05$). A significant association was found to exist between day nursery and nursery school directors in terms of their expectations for the

occurrence of ten cognitively-based learning activities ($r=.94$; $t=7.67$; $p<.05$).

The findings from this study indicated that no distinctions in terms of cognitive emphases actually existed between day nurseries and nursery schools. It was recommended that the Pinellas County License Board examine the procedures by which it classifies centers as day nurseries and nursery schools, that further studies be conducted to investigate the county's preschool programs in terms of their affective and cognitive emphases and that efforts be made to improve existing programs in response to the findings of such studies.

CHAPTER ONE INTRODUCTION

The purposes of this study were to ascertain the expressed curriculum priorities of selected Pinellas County, Florida, day nursery and nursery school directors; to determine the association between expressed curriculum priorities and daily activities at the centers; and to ascertain the differences between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills, as determined through interviews with the center directors and observations within classrooms for four-year-old children.

Introduction and Background Information

Recent employment and economic trends and concomitant changes in family life have contributed to the urgency which surrounds the issue of child care in America. Existing child care facilities are not sufficient in quality or number to serve the needs of preschool children (Bronfenbrenner, 1976a; Keyserling, 1972; Pines, 1967; Ruopp, 1979). In 1977, the Women's Bureau of the United States Department of Labor documented a series of trends which represented the extent and magnitude of the changes in American society and the American family since 1940.

In summarizing these trends, Greenman observed:

Since 1940, the number of working women has doubled--an important change. However, for the same period, the number of working mothers has increased TENFOLD. In March, 1976, 56% of all mothers with school aged children worked outside the home, a majority of them full time. Forty percent of mothers with preschool children are employed. Only 34 families out of 100 have the husband as the sole breadwinner It is estimated that four out of every ten children born in the 1970's will at some time be a member of a one-parent household. (1978, p. 18)

Additional data compiled during 1978 have revealed that 98% of all single-parent families are headed by females; 63% of female heads with children work full-time; and 50% of all those with children under three work full-time (Ruopp, 1979).

Changing attitudes about women's roles in society have accompanied these social and economic trends. Women are now given increased education and career opportunities; however, "the important early career years coincide with the equally important formative family years and the need for child care support is increased" (Greenman, 1978, p. 18). Moreover, the extended family has almost disappeared and smaller families have reduced the likelihood of older siblings as sitters for working mothers.

Bronfenbrenner observed that "the general trend reveals progressive fragmentation and isolation of the family in its child-rearing role" (1978, p. 1). He estimated that millions of preschool children go without necessary care while their mothers work. Unfortunately,

recognition of the need for more and better child care facilities has not been accompanied by provision of funds or large-scale support for public child care centers (Ruopp, 1979). For example, Project Headstart was given \$150,000,000 for its first summer program, but only \$7,000,000 was appropriated for day care (Pines, 1967, p. 160). Additionally, most of that initial funding was applied toward improving licensing procedures, for until that time few states had established criteria for day care instructional staff; generally the standards applied to health and safety regulations. Pines recognized the need for more stringent licensing, but stressed the desperate need for service.

Need for the Study

Nationally, the need for research data about day care was widely recognized in 1974, when the Administration for Children, Youth and Families commissioned the National Day Care Study. Ruopp (1979) contended that the need for research data in 1979 is even more urgent: "During the past five years, the number of children in day care arrangements has increased significantly; children are beginning day care at an earlier age, and both parental needs for and government support of day care services are growing" (p. xxiii).

Twenty-eight percent of the 37,362 children in Pinellas County, Florida, are under six years of age

according to a county census report (Juvenile Welfare Board, 1978, p. 4). Approximately 41% of the children under six (15,318 children) have working mothers. Thus, the need for both full-day and part-day quality child care, at an affordable cost, is crucial in this county.

In 1961, the Legislature of the State of Florida enacted a law to define and regulate children's centers in Pinellas County, Florida. This law created the Pinellas County License Board to monitor licensing and operating procedures in accordance with the standards established by the law. The law regulated staff qualifications, center size and enrollment, health and safety standards, and building and zoning regulations. The law also defined and distinguished between day nurseries and nursery schools in the county. According to the law a day nursery is defined as a children's center which "provides shelter, food, rest, care, and training" for children aged two to six (Chapter 61-2681, Laws of Florida). A nursery school, however, is defined as a children's center which "offers an educational program of directed, organized play and training at the level of the child's growth and development" in addition to "providing food, shelter, rest, and care" (Chapter 61-2681, Laws of Florida). The law provided that schools which qualified as "nursery schools" would give greater attention to cognitive development than did those which were categorized as "day nurseries."

The explicit distinction between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive development, found in Florida law, is also found in the literature related to day care and children's centers in America (Kamii, 1971). In the nineteenth century, child care programs emerged to provide care, shelter and socialization for the children of immigrant working mothers (Kerr, 1973). Soon, both public and private child care centers emerged which were designed to meet the personal, social, and emotional needs of young children. Later, programs designed to meet the cognitive needs of children emerged in response to research that indicated intelligence was not fixed at birth (Bloom, 1964; Bruner, 1960; Evans, 1971).

Throughout the history of child care, researchers have neglected to study the role of the children's center director in shaping center policies and practices (Fein and Clarke-Stewart, 1973; Neugebauer, 1975; Parker and Day, 1972), although it was suggested that the director was a key determinant in program success and in establishing curriculum priorities and practices (Axelrod and Buch, 1977; Weikart, 1972).

Thus, the purposes of this study were to ascertain the expressed curriculum priorities of selected Pinellas County, Florida, day nursery and nursery school directors; to determine the association between expressed curriculum priorities and daily activities at the centers; and to ascertain the differences between day nurseries and nursery

schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills as determined through interviews with the center directors and observations within classrooms for four-year-old children. It was hypothesized that, although the law distinguishes between day nursery and nursery school programs, there was no significant difference between day nursery and nursery school programs in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills.

In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the investigator identified the following research questions:

1. What were the expressed curriculum priorities of directors of day nurseries and nursery schools in the sample?
2. Were there differences in expressed curriculum priorities between and among the directors of the two types of children's centers which comprised the sample: day nurseries and nursery schools?
3. Was there an association between directors' expressed curriculum priorities for daily activities and their occurrence during classroom observations?
4. Was there an association between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills?

Definitions of Terms

For the purposes of this study, the following definitions were used:

- Children's Center any licensed day nursery or nursery school which cares for five or more children, aged 17 years or under, for two to 12 hours per day (Chapter 61-2681, Laws of Florida)
- Day Nursery licensed children's center for children aged two to six, operated for purposes of providing shelter, food, rest, care, and training (Chapter 61-2681, Laws of Florida)
- Formal Learning learning which occurs as a result of direct, conscious, and systematic activities (Monroe, 1972, p. 647)
- Four-year-olds four-year-old children placed in classrooms with their age-mates
- Informal Learning learning which occurs incidentally within the setting
- Nursery School licensed children's center for children aged two to six, operated for purposes of offering an educational program of directed, organized play and training at the level of the child's growth and development and providing shelter, food, rest, and care (Chapter 61-2681, Laws of Florida)

Assumptions Which Governed the Study

The investigator assumed that sampled children's centers differed in terms of their philosophies, functions, and curricula and the extent to which there was a match between expressed curriculum priorities and actual practices. It was also assumed that personal, social, and

cognitive growth were inseparable in children and that there was no one right way to promote learning and growth.

Procedures Used in the Study

The investigator conducted an exploratory field study of selected variables at a sample of day nurseries and nursery schools in Pinellas County, Florida. The selected variables were the expressed curriculum priorities of day nursery and nursery school directors, associations between expressed curriculum priorities and daily classroom activities, and emphasis on cognitive development of four-year-old children at day nurseries and nursery schools.

Sampled centers were randomly selected from licensed child care centers in the northern part of Pinellas County. Two instruments, developed by the Research Division of the Institute For Development of Educational Activities, were adapted for use in the study: the Director Interview Form and the Classroom Observation Instrument. The first, Director Interview Form, elicited general information about the school through an interview with the director. The second, the Classroom Observation Instrument, supplied the guideline for observing actual daily occurrences in the schools.

After field testing the instruments at two randomly selected child care centers from those available in the north region of Pinellas County, and not used in the study, the investigator collected data at the 20 randomly selected centers comprising the sample, ten day nurseries and ten

nursery schools. Each director interview was conducted on the afternoon before the classroom observation at the center. Each classroom observation occurred during the children's morning activity period, when it was assumed that comparable activities were taking place at the sampled centers.

Data from this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Demographic data collected with the Director Interview Form were presented in narrative form; these data included information about race, sex, tenure of directors, types of centers and their enrollments, class groupings, and sources of funding. Differences between day nursery and nursery school directors' rankings of curricular priorities were determined by t-tests between their mean ranks. Associations between directors' expressed curriculum priorities and instructional practices were determined by the use of a Pearson Correlation Coefficient. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient were used to test the correlation between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their cognitive emphases.

Limitations of the Study

This study was conducted with a sample of children's centers in Pinellas County, Florida; therefore, any generalizations beyond Pinellas County, Florida, are suggestive rather than definitive.

No quantitative method was used for recording the philosophical statements of center directors or statements about school functions.

Efforts to describe classroom observations relied on one observer (the investigator) who gathered data during one three-hour visit; more reliable observations could have resulted from visits over time.

The investigator relied on face validity for the instruments selected for data collection.

Organization of the Study

The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter One provides background information and a rationale for the study, as well as its assumptions, limitations, and procedures. In Chapter Two, the literature pertinent to the questions addressed by the study is presented, treating the history of child care in America, theoretical considerations, and major studies of programs for young children. Chapter Three describes the research design and methodology for data collection and analyses. Chapter Four presents the data analysis. In Chapter Five, the final chapter, the findings of the study and hypotheses generated for further research are discussed.

CHAPTER TWO REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The literature reviewed in this chapter was selected to provide a historical context for day care in America and to present theoretical considerations and research studies related to curriculum planning for child care centers. The history and background of child care programs from the nineteenth century through present-day influences are discussed. Three theoretical perspectives (the Maturation, Environmental, and Cognitive) which influenced child development research are described. Following a discussion of programs for young children, the implications of the literature for this study are addressed.

History and Background

Historically, in America, public support for child care was generated more by national needs than by concern for children. The diversity of these needs over time contributed to the evolution of preschool programs which varied in their approaches to the education of young children. During the nineteenth century, immigration and industrialization together influenced the growing need for child care. The Civil War forced mothers, especially in the North, into employment outside the home. In the twentieth century, private and public nursery schools

emerged to satisfy the different demands for child care, such as part-day enrichment experiences for some children and day-long care and instruction for others.

Nineteenth Century Influences

The concept of organized child care outside the home first emerged in America in the nineteenth century as a corollary to immigration and industrialization. Between 1815 and 1860, over five million families arrived in the United States from foreign countries (Kerr, 1973, p. 158); many of the female immigrants sought work outside their homes in the nearby factories. Thus, the need arose for non-family members to care for their children. According to Kerr, the first day nursery in the United States opened in 1838 (1973, p. 158). By the end of the 1800's, approximately 175 children's centers had been established around the country. In response to the increasing number of centers, the National Federation of Day Nurseries was founded in 1898 with the purpose of uniting the centers and setting standards for them (Kerr, 1973).

Initially, American child care centers resembled the French garderies and creches which had emerged to serve the infants and children of field workers and factory workers; a chief aim of these early centers was to reduce the mortality rates of children with working mothers. The centers provided more than care and protection; socialization was also a primary function since many of the children

were immigrants. In describing one such center, the Hull House Day Nursery, Jane Addams wrote: "It is now carried on by the United Charities of Chicago in a finely equipped building on our block, where the immigrant mothers are cared for as well as the children, and where they are taught the things which will make life in America more possible" (1910, p. 169). During this period, however, the working mothers who required the services of the children's centers were faulted for not having the means to care for their children at home.

Twentieth Century Influences

Two distinct movements which emerged in the twentieth century were private and public nursery schools, each characterized by different purposes, functions, and objectives. Kamii (1971) observed that ". . . until the early 1960s the purpose of nursery schools was mainly to provide day care for working class children and to foster the socio-emotional growth of middle-class children" (p. 283). The private nursery school existed to provide enrichment experiences in a recreational environment; its program was designed to operate for no more than three hours daily and its clients were relatively privileged children (Lazar, 1973). Like the privately funded and used centers, the public centers continued to emphasize health and good habits. Modeled after the child care centers of the nineteenth century, these centers provided day-long custodial and protective

care for the children of mothers who had joined the work force. The curriculum consisted of habit training, eating, napping, and health.

During the 1920s, nursery schools were also established in colleges and universities for research purposes. Such laboratory schools were designed to "discover and demonstrate better ways of caring for young children" (Sears and Dowley, 1963, p. 815).

As more programs emerged, related developments occurred which affected their growth. In 1912 the Children's Bureau was established to develop parent education programs and to better provide for homeless children. It also influenced child labor reform and supported research in child development (Bradbury, 1975). Paralleling the appearance of more nursery schools and kindergartens the early childhood education movement gained more professional status. For example, the International Kindergarten Union and the National Council of Primary Education jointly founded the Journal of Childhood Education in 1924. These two organizations merged six years later into the Association for Childhood Education.

Short observed that the period from 1920 to 1930 was a time of growth for the nursery school movement, but that it was also a time of strain. Controversies emerged "over the relationship of symbolism to realism . . . , over the extent of free play versus teacher direction, and over the nature of creative activity" (1973, p. 12). These same issues

were debated by child care experts as the need for child care continued to escalate in the latter part of the twentieth century.

During the 1930s, the federal government became involved in child care. To offset the effects of the Depression, the government provided jobs for unemployed teachers in child care centers (Short, 1973). Monies from the Federal Emergency Relief Agency financed in-service and pre-service training for staff, supported parent education, and influenced the public's awareness of the value of pre-school education (Kerr, 1973).

Prior to the 1940s, working mothers unable to care for their children during the day had often been viewed with suspicion or contempt; however, the public attitude toward working mothers altered significantly with the United States' entrance into World War II, as women were needed for the war effort. The change in attitude was accompanied by federally supported child care programs. Public Law 137, the Lanham Act, was legislated to grant federal funds to cover up to fifty percent of the cost of child care for mothers involved in the war effort (Frost, 1973, p. 16). When the war ended, funds generated by the Lanham Act for child care centers ceased to exist. Lack of federal support closed all centers except those in California. Yet, the need for quality child care continued to escalate.

Demands for attention to the needs of minority children accompanied the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Federal legislation mandated programs to meet the needs of disadvantaged children from deprived environments. It was believed that the effects of poverty could be overcome through correcting the biases in schools and compensating minority students for inadequate home environments. Just as programs in the nineteenth century evolved to bring immigrant children into the mainstream of American life, extensive child care legislation in the 1960s grew out of the need for social reform that would halt the poverty syndrome of certain groups. Highly significant programs were born, but they emerged to satisfy demands for financial and racial equality, not primarily to satisfy the needs of children and youth.

During the 1960s, day care began to be viewed as the vehicle for preparing disadvantaged children for school life. Many educators proposed that middle class expectations, language patterns and attitudes toward learning dominated the schools and robbed children from differing races or social classes of the promise of school success. It was believed that programs such as "Headstart" and "Follow Through" would provide children with new skills to ensure later school success (Hechinger, 1966; Leeper, 1974).

Theoretical Considerations

Although our society has traditionally placed children in day care centers in response to adult needs, once there the children often became the focus of research in child

development. In the following section, three theoretical perspectives which influenced child development research are discussed: Maturational, Environmental, and Cognitive Theories.

Maturational Theory

During the 1940s and 1950s, maturational theorists proposed that the child was a potential adult, unfolding according to a pattern determined by genetic factors and muscular and perceptual readiness (Gesell, 1940). Child care centers which were responsive to maturational theories were later referred to as "traditional" centers. Such programs were child-centered, present-oriented, and characterized by limited emphasis on cognitive development; much emphasis was placed on social and emotional growth. The philosophy of proponents of the maturational theory was not to rush children's development, but to surround them with a nurturing environment of love and care. Maturational programs were predicated on the belief that:

. . . the main role of the nursery school teacher is to teach the child to control his (antisocial) impulses and to provide the environment in which the thrusts for companionship, physical competence, independence, and understanding may be fulfilled. The pedagogical environment should create a climate that allows inner 'good' to unfold and permits inner 'bad' to come under the influence of the inner good. It should be an enriched environment which allows for self-expression, creativity, and a readiness that will develop spontaneously. (Fein and Clarke-Stewart, 1973, p. 201)

During the 1940s and 1950s, researchers with other than a maturational perspective began to study and speculate on

the nature of the child's thought processes. Prior to this time, little was known about how children perceived and interpreted the world around them; consequently, procedures and objectives for enhancing cognitive growth were not clearly articulated. Newer interpretations of child development questioned the idea that readiness for cognitive learning emerged naturally.

Environmental Theories

According to certain theorists (such as Bereiter and Engelmann, 1966; Nimnicht, 1969; and Weikart, 1972), the environment can be structured both to communicate information and to induce motivation. Child care centers which subscribe to such environmental theories were goal- and future-oriented (Fein and Clarke-Stewart, 1973). The environmental proponents viewed the intellect as malleable and trainable; therefore, they used direct instruction techniques and external reinforcement. Fein and Clarke-Stewart (1973) stated:

By a process of gradually reducing tangible external reinforcement and continually using the least powerful reinforcement that is effective, the child can be taught to want to learn Therefore, there is no reason for waiting for this motivation to develop naturally. (p. 205)

Environmental theorists subscribed to Bruner's hypothesis that any subject could be taught effectively in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development; however, Bruner (1960) qualified this

hypothesis by noting that a child's developmental level determined the teaching procedures and materials likely to be most effective and the level of understanding he could attain.

The Montessori Method also incorporated environmental tasks. Children in Montessori schools interacted with increasingly complex materials which were highly structured and self-selected. Because children were free to choose materials with which to work and determine their own schedules, it was believed that the environment was intrinsically rewarding and children would seek "learning for its own sake" not for external reinforcers.

Cognitive Theorists

Cognitive theorists refuted the belief that some pre-existent inner seed determined what and how well children learned. The cognitive-developmental theorist Piaget postulated that growth occurred as the individual moved through stages of development when interacting with the environment. According to Piaget (1963), growth occurred during the processes of exploring, manipulating, adapting to, and assimilating from the environment. He asserted that these processes were intrinsically motivating. In addition to providing justification for early intervention programs, Piaget's theories offered several critical implications for early childhood educators, among them that sensorimotor experiences were important to child development; language

and thinking were interrelated; and new experiences could best be assimilated when built upon familiar ones. Burgess (1965, p. 11) emphasized that critical to Piaget's theories was the assumption that "accelerated learning of abstract concepts without sufficient related direct experience may result in symbols without meaning."

Hunt's research (1961) supported the idea of the malleable nature of the child's capacity for growth. He rejected the contention that intelligence was fixed at birth and reinterpreted the concept of intelligence as something which could be mediated by appropriate forces. Like other cognitive theorists, he proffered hope for early intervention programs, since he demonstrated that intelligence could be modified by both environment and education.

Summary

Traditional child care programs which evolved in response to maturational theories were designed to foster personal, social and emotional growth; it was assumed that cognitive growth would follow if a child's feelings of independence and adequacy unfolded naturally. Programs which evolved in response to environmental or cognitive theories focused on eliciting other facets of the child's development in addition to social growth and mental health. Such programs stressed the potential of the early years as a time for learning and growth in cognitive as well as affective areas.

Studies of Programs for Young Children

In the following section, Bronfenbrenner's (1976b) analysis of current day care practice is presented. Three studies of programs for young children are discussed. The first, by Abt Associates, was a study of the costs and effects of the regulatory characteristics of center day care. The second, by Westinghouse, was a comprehensive evaluation study of the general impact of Project Headstart. The third, by Weikart, examined longitudinal effects of the Perry Preschool Project. Additionally, one treatment-comparison study and two studies of existing programs are reported.

Research on the Effects of Day Care on Child Development (1976b)--Bronfenbrenner

Bronfenbrenner (1976b) reviewed day care research and practice in the United States from an ecological perspective and identified emerging trends and issues. He found that existing day care research and practice were particularly narrow in scope for they failed to take into account the profound changes assailing our nation's families. Among the limitations which he cited were selectivity of sampling, the circumscribed context and often artificial character of the behaviors assessed. He observed that most research was conducted in centers unlike those available to most parents, i.e., university-based centers with high staff-child ratios. Of the studies he reviewed, only one presented follow-up

data beyond the preschool years. Such restriction to immediate effects was further complicated by the lack of ecological validity of most studies; since the settings within which studies occurred were artificial, results could not be generalized to other populations. He suggested that major areas for future research might include the content and impact of different types of day care, effects of part-time versus full-time care, effects of custodial versus developmental care, and the significance and effects of day care for parents and other family members.

Bronfenbrenner asserted that quality day care programs should be described in written materials and talks which are made available to parents. These descriptions should include information about goals, objectives, and discipline techniques. Moreover, parents should be invited and encouraged to visit repeatedly, observe, ask questions, and make suggestions.

Bronfenbrenner also questioned the effects of early intervention programs, observing that the "day care experience appears to have neither salutary nor adverse effects on the intellectual development (as measured by standardized tests) of most children" (1976b, p. 22). He contended that this finding was supported in data from both Traditional and Cognitive-Developmental day care programs. Further, he claimed that it is "naive to expect children to be inoculated by an early intervention program against the negative impact of subsequent, less stimulating

environments" (p. 22). Bronfenbrenner concluded that a need exists for "substantial reorientation, expansion, and especially, innovation in prevailing policies and programs" (p. 22).

Final Report of the National Day Care Study (1979)--Ruopp

The national day care study was a four-year study of center day care, principally for three-, four-, and five-year-old children. The study was initiated in 1974 by the Day Care Services Division of the Office of Child Development and was designed to investigate the costs and effects associated with variations of regulatory characteristics of center day care--especially caregiver-child ratio, group size, and caregiver qualifications. According to Ruopp (1979), these three characteristics were key determinants of quality center care, and all have been critical factors in both state and federal regulations.

The sample included licensed day care centers located in urban areas and serving (or eligible to serve) low-income children through public subsidy. Three sites were chosen for the study: Atlanta, Detroit, and Seattle. Centers in the sample met the following criteria: provided year-round full-day care; were in operation at least one year; served English-speaking preschool children; had an adequate sample of full-time three- and four-year-old children.

The national day care study was conducted in three phases. First, a national sample of centers was surveyed by telephone to provide data about their distribution and

characteristics (equipment, caregiver, child ratios, group size, program schedules and activities). Second, on-site interviews were conducted with a sample of 57 center directors, 146 caregivers, and 190 parents in those same centers to gather more data on characteristics as well as opinions. Third, caregivers were observed in 38 of the 57 centers. These first-hand data were used to develop a profile of caregiver behaviors.

The findings of the National Day Care Study were: higher quality care was associated with two low-cost ingredients--smaller groups of children and caregivers having child-specific education and training. The most important finding for policy and practice was that group size and caregiver:child ratio have a major impact on important outcomes for children and that specific combinations of these characteristics can achieve better quality care at lower cost. Specifically, across all study sites, smaller groups were consistently associated with better care, more socially active children and higher gains on two developmental tests. Caregivers with education/training relevant to young children delivered better care with somewhat superior developmental effects for children.

Westinghouse-Ohio State Study of Project Headstart (1969)

In a comprehensive evaluative study, the Westinghouse Learning Corporation and Ohio State University assessed the general impact of Headstart. Principally, they examined the

intellectual and personal-social development of primary grade children with Headstart backgrounds.

The sample included children from 104 Headstart centers who (at the time of the study) were attending first, second or third grade. In the sample were children who had attended Headstart either for one summer or for a full-year program. They were compared to a sample of "matched controls" who had not attended Headstart classes. Data were gathered on language development, reading readiness, and academic achievement as well as affective characteristics such as self-concept, desire for achievement, and attitudes toward school, home, peers, and society.

No persistent gains were associated (in either affective or cognitive development) with summer Headstart programs. While full-year programs appeared to result in selected cognitive advantages, such as improved reading readiness, affective measures did not indicate any advantage to Headstart children. The findings seemed to indicate that summer programs should be abandoned for more extended programs throughout the year; the program would appear to have greater efficacy if younger children were involved and more varied teaching strategies were employed; remedial teaching techniques were needed to combat specific language deficiencies; additionally, parents should be trained and involved.

When this study appeared, serious criticism was voiced in regard to sampling procedures and the statistical

analyses of test scores obtained from the children. Smith and Bissell (1970) concluded that educationally significant gains were made by many children, particularly black children in urban Headstart centers. Cicirelli, Evans and Schiller (1970) challenged Smith and Bissell and maintained that the original, "essentially pessimistic" findings were "basically accurate."

Perry Preschool Project (1971)--Weikart

The Perry Preschool Project has been operating since 1962 as a two-year, cognitively-oriented compensatory program which has adapted and applied Piaget's developmental theories. It was designed to meet the major criticisms associated with Headstart: "insufficient time for preschool education and lack of specific focus in terms of critical educational activities" (Evans, 1971, p. 76). This program has utilized verbal bombardment techniques, dramatic play, field trips, and structured cognitive tasks.

Longitudinal data were collected on variables such as intellectual growth, classroom behavior, and school achievement. It was found that children who had participated in the program evidenced better academic achievement in the primary grades as compared to children in the control groups. Data on other variables (such as social behavior, school conduct, emotional adjustment, and academic motivation) also favored program participants.

Treatment-Comparison Studies

Rather than focusing on one experimental and one control group, some researchers have used a treatment-comparison design to compare different curricular approaches over time. One such study (Karnes, Teska, and Hodges, 1969) compared traditional versus cognitive programs. It was found that the more structured, cognitively-based programs more strongly influenced intellectual development over a two-year period. Mayer (1971) observed that often such evaluations are ". . . based on program labels with little descriptive information or observational research documenting how children and teachers actually spend their time. Consequently, attempts to explain results as a function of differences in program models are still premature" (p. 133). Weikart (1972), after finding no significant differences among three curriculum models (Cognitively Oriented; Language Training; and Unit-based) utilized in the Ypsilanti Preschool Demonstration Project, injected a further caution regarding the interpretation of research about various programs:

I expected to find immediate differences on most measures among the three curriculum models. Instead I found that during the time I was able to maintain equal momentum and staff commitment for the three programs, we obtained equal results on most measures from standardized intelligence tests to classroom observations and teacher ratings. (pp. 54-55)

Weikart concluded that two essentials for operating successful preschools were effective planning and effective supervision.

Although no studies have been reported in the literature regarding expressed curriculum priorities of day care center directors and the relationship of these priorities to classroom practices, two studies have been conducted which relate to curriculum planning and implementation at children's centers. These studies examined key management factors at children's centers (Neugebauer, 1975) and existing programs for young children (Goodlad, Klein, and Novotney, 1973).

An Organizational Analysis of New England Day Care Centers
(1975)--Neugebauer

This report of an organizational analysis of 35 day care centers in New England defined key factors in the management of children's centers and assessed the relative proficiency with which centers dealt with these factors. The sample was geographically balanced and included centers with enrollments of from 14-120 students. The analysis was restricted to three variables: center size, decision-making (level of participation of all staff members in making major decisions), and roles (comparison between directors and teachers within centers, as well as between directors and teachers in all centers). Neugebauer conducted his study in three phases: informal visits for observations, interviews, and questionnaires. He found that the director's role in sampled centers was primarily administrative. Very few of the centers made deliberate and regular efforts to involve parents in planning and decision-making.

Accompanying the low level of organizational planning was a low level of organizational evaluation. Neugebauer concluded that despite the resurgence of interest in day care nationally, the centers in his sample existed in professional isolation.

Early Schooling in the United States (1973)--Goodlad, Klein, and Novotney

In 1973, Goodlad, Klein and Novotney published the results of their comprehensive three-year study of 209 nursery schools in nine major cities. Their report was a "self-portrait painted by the directors and a portrayal of what trained observers saw in schools and classrooms--in effect, a picture of the average urban nursery school in the United States" (p. 123).

Using a Director Interview Form to elicit general information about the school (goals, curricula, facilities, personnel, and philosophy), they interviewed each nursery school director in the sample. They then conducted classroom observations on-site with the Classroom Observation Form. The observation instrument included data about the activities, materials, interactions, attitudes and organization of individual classrooms within each school. They found that:

. . . programs in the different types of preschools existing in this country lacked the variety and richness implied by the recent ferment in the field. The typical nursery school provided limited opportunities for expression of individual differences and offers a narrow range of activities to encourage a child's development. (p. 98)

Program evaluation at the schools in the sample was conducted in an unstructured or perfunctory way. The evaluation process was "loose, informal, and rather sporadic" (p. 98). Additionally, in virtually all of the schools, no formal or regular system of reporting to parents was used. There was an enormous, not just a slight, discrepancy between the lists of activities appearing regularly in the schools and the list of desired activities compiled by experts in the field. The overwhelming majority of the nursery schools studied conduct a rather narrowly prescribed traditional program. They found few instances where teachers of young children were proceeding with a precise, sequenced curriculum designed to develop specific behaviors clearly envisioned by those teachers.

The majority of the 209 schools studied by Goodlad and associates demonstrated a lack of fit between stated goals and curricular emphases. These schools failed to exhibit a clear sense of direction, vision in attaining goals and more than a marginal level of expertise in their staffs. Either the staffs were unaware of what constituted well-conceived programs "to foster development in the areas to which they claim to be dedicated" or they simply lacked the skills for implementation (p. 137). Goodlad discerned an incongruity between nursery schools as they existed and the ideals and practices considered to be at the forefront of research and theory. The team concluded that "although

they are comfortable places for children to be, most pre-schools in the study are pedestrian and unimpressive" (p. 119).

Implications of the Literature Reviewed for this Study

The literature reviewed for this study revealed that no common core of agreement existed among experts about priorities for early childhood programs. Butler (1971), after extensive review and analysis, concluded that research in early childhood education in the United States was characterized by conflicting ideologies and rapid change. She determined that key issues in this conflict were related to direct instruction as opposed to incidental learning, cognitive learning as opposed to a more broadly based curriculum and questions of emphasis regarding present-oriented (child-centered) and future-oriented (preparation for school) education (p. 143).

In referring to the lack of consensus among early childhood educators about goals and programs, Weber contended that trial and error seemed to be the dominant approach (1970, p. 171). Berman expressed a similar view of the current state of flux in curriculum design and implementation:

 Ferment, experimentation and change are evident in early childhood education. There is much confusion about the purposes of programs for young children; the means for achieving these purposes are even more diffuse and uncertain. (1970, p. 131)

Historically, children's center directors were key determinants of successful programs. Kerr (1973) concluded that the quality of early nurseries was inseparable from the quality of the director:

Those (early nurseries) that had the advantage of strong leadership attempted, in addition to providing clean, healthy places for children, to offer something of interest for them to do during the day, and to solve, for other members of the family, problems that came to their attention. Other nurseries were at best custodial holding operations that focused on physical care and protection from environmental hazards. (p. 158)

Certain early childhood specialists proposed that the director was the central curriculum planner and supervisor of classroom activities:

On the whole, the director serves as the balance wheel in the operation of the curriculum model, maintaining through supportive services, dedication, and knowledge, the momentum that the staff has generated. (Weikart, 1973, p. 55)

Although it was suggested in the literature that the director was a key determinant in establishing curriculum priorities (Axelrod and Buch, 1977; Cherry, 1973; Lazar, 1973; Weikart, 1972), researchers have neglected to study the role of the director of the children's center. Almost without exception, studies of child care centers have focused on measures of change in children, such as their I. Q. scores or growth in language acquisition. No known studies have examined the director's role in shaping the curriculum, defining priorities, or facilitating classroom practices which reflected those priorities.

Thus, the purposes of this study were to ascertain the expressed curriculum priorities of selected Pinellas County, Florida, day nursery and nursery school directors; to determine the association between expressed curriculum priorities and daily activities at the centers; and to ascertain the differences between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills as determined through interviews with the center directors and observations within classrooms for four-year-old children. It was hypothesized that, although the law distinguished between day nursery and nursery school programs, there was no significant difference between day nursery and nursery school programs in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills.

CHAPTER THREE METHODOLOGY

The investigator conducted an exploratory field study of selected variables at a sample of day nurseries and nursery schools in Pinellas County, Florida. The selected variables were the expressed curriculum priorities of day nursery and nursery school directors; associations between expressed curriculum priorities and daily classroom activities; and emphasis on cognitive development of four-year-old children at day nurseries and nursery schools.

Kerlinger described field studies as "ex post facto scientific inquiries aimed at discovering the relations and interactions among sociological, psychological, and educational variables in real social structures" (1973, p. 405). When conducting a field study, one examines the institutional situation and then studies relationships among "attitudes, values, perceptions, and behaviors of individuals and groups in the situation." No independent variables are manipulated. Thus, the exploratory field study enabled the investigator to examine associations between statements about curriculum priorities and conditions and interactions at sampled centers. Attitudes, values, and perceptions of directors were elicited by interviews; behaviors were examined during classroom observations.

Exploratory field studies are designed to seek what is rather than predict relationships to be found (Kerlinger, 1973). In practice, they assist one "to discover significant variables in the field situations, to discover relations among variables, and to lay the ground work for later, more systematic and rigorous testing of hypotheses." Among the demonstrated strengths of field studies are their heuristic characteristics, realism, significance, and theory orientation. Two of their weaknesses are: their ex post facto character makes statements of relations weaker than they are in experimental research and a lack of precision exists in the measurement of field variables due to the complexity of field situations. Kerlinger observed that "the field researcher needs to be a salesman, administrator, and entrepreneur as well as investigator" (1973, p. 405).

The exploratory field method was chosen for this study in order to enable the investigator to examine the expressed curriculum priorities of selected day nursery and nursery school directors, to determine the association between these priorities and daily activities at the centers, and to ascertain the differences between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of emphasis on cognitive development of four-year-olds.

Procedures

Pinellas County is one of the largest counties in Florida, encompassing 265 square miles of land and 44 square miles of water. For purposes of licensing and regulating child care centers, the Pinellas County License Board for Children's Centers has divided the county into north and south regions. The south region is served by 82 licensed child care centers administered by the License Board's St. Petersburg office; the north region is served by 57 licensed centers and is administered by the Clearwater office of the License Board.

Selection of the Sample

To provide for greater objectivity, the investigator (who lived in the south region and directed a children's center there) selected a sample for study from the north region of the County. None of the sampled center directors in the north region had any previous contact with the investigator prior to their participation in the study.

The investigator first identified the number and type of child care centers in the northern part of Pinellas County by contacting the Pinellas County License Board for Children's Centers, located at the Juvenile Welfare Board. The License Board provided the investigator with a list of licensed centers, classified by type, which included the addresses and phone numbers of centers and the names of their directors.

Forty-five of the 57 licensed children's centers in the north region of Pinellas County were classified as either day nurseries or nursery schools. According to State Law (Chapter 61-2681), a day nursery provides shelter, food, rest, care and training for children aged two to six; however, the Law defines a nursery school as a children's center which offers an educational program of directed, organized play and training at the level of the child's growth and development and provides food, shelter, rest, and care. Twenty of the 45 licensed day nurseries and nursery schools were randomly selected for the sample in the following way: The investigator wrote the names of the 27 day nurseries on slips of paper and placed them in a shoe box; then ten names were drawn from the box, one at a time. These names were recorded and then the same procedure was followed with the names of the 18 nursery schools available from the north region of the County (See Appendix 1: Licensed Children's Centers in the North Region of Pinellas County/Sampled Centers).

Following the selection of the sample, the investigator telephoned the director of each center drawn for the sample to describe briefly the intended study and request an interview appointment. All directors randomly selected for the sample agreed to participate in the study. A letter more fully describing the study was sent to all directors after the initial phone call requesting their participation (See Appendix 2: Letter to Sampled Directors).

Selection of the Instruments

In preparation for their extensive studies of pre-school programs here and abroad, the Research Division of I/D/E/A, in conjunction with a nationally selected panel of experts in early childhood education, developed two instruments for surveying preschools: the Director Interview Form and the Classroom Observation Instrument. The first, the Director Interview Form "was intended to elicit general information about the school itself--its goals, curricula, facilities, personnel, and philosophy. This information was to be obtained through an interview with the head of the school" (Goodlad, Klein and Novotney, 1973, p. 64). The second, the Classroom Observation Instrument, "was to supply the basis for comprehensively observing what actually went on in the given school . . . the activities, materials, interactions, attitudes, and organization of individual classrooms within the school" (Goodlad, Klein and Novotney, 1973, p. 64). According to Goodlad:

After drafts of the two forms had been made, the coordinators (early childhood specialists selected for the Goodlad study) were invited to attend a two-day conference to make final plans for conducting the survey. The forms were the main topic of discussion, and they were carefully analyzed and modified according to the suggestions made by the coordinators. Each coordinator then used them in interviews and visits to selected preschools in the Los Angeles area. Working in pairs, they collected the same information that would be gathered from the schools in their particular cities. On the basis of these visits, the forms were discussed and analyzed again, and further changes were made so that they more nearly complied with conditions actually observed.

Definitions and terminology were discussed and agreed upon and impressions compared so that judgments to be made later would be consistent in terms of these common definitions and assumptions. (1973, p. 64)

Permission was secured from I/D/E/A to adapt and use the two instruments for the current study because of their relevance to the questions addressed by the study (See Appendix 3: Letter of Permission).

Adaptation of the Instruments

The investigator used the Director Interview Form prepared by the Goodlad team of early childhood specialists with only two minor modifications: the investigator recorded the race of the respondents; and the investigator asked directors how long they had been in that capacity at their centers (See Appendix 4). Additionally, directors were asked to rank-order their curriculum priorities at the end of the interview. Eleven cards were printed, each bearing the name of one of the eleven curricular areas considered essential by the I/D/E/A research team. The final question asked by the investigator was: "Would you please take these cards, read them, and then rank them from most important (1) to least important (11) in your curriculum for four-year-olds?"

The Classroom Observation Instrument was used only in classrooms for four-year-old children because it was assumed that four-year-olds would be exposed to the range of activities listed on the observation instrument and that sampling

only classrooms for four-year-olds would insure greater uniformity in data collection. It was decided that if a center had more than one classroom for four-year-olds, the investigator would randomly select which classroom to observe. Because of their irrelevance to the current study, the investigator eliminated two sections of the original instrument: a section on the furniture and facilities and a section on the physical surroundings of the centers (See Appendix 5).

It was assumed that the resulting instruments possessed face validity. To determine the reliability of the Classroom Observation Instrument for the purposes of this study, the investigator asked a local early childhood specialist (a professor at a local college) to observe in a randomly selected classroom for four-year-olds at the same time as the investigator. The observer was told to record with a check mark (✓) each time he observed an occurrence of one of the 26 curricular areas or activities listed on the instrument; he was supplied with the operational definitions which governed the study. Inter-rater agreement was calculated using the following formula: $\text{number of items with agreement} \div \text{number of items with disagreement}$ (Evertson et al., 1980; Prawat, 1980). Reliability was determined by $\text{number of agreements} \div \text{number of agreements and disagreements}$. The reliability coefficient was .67.

Field Testing the Instruments

Prior to beginning data collection, the investigator field-tested the two adapted instruments (the Director Interview Form and the Classroom Observation Instrument) at two randomly selected child care centers from those available in the north region of Pinellas County. One day nursery and one nursery school served as field test sites. Directors at both of these centers agreed to serve as pilot centers.

The investigator interviewed the day nursery director using the Director Interview Form during one afternoon session; three days later the investigator observed during the morning session at the day nursery in a classroom for four-year-olds using the Classroom Observation Instrument. Three weeks later the same procedure was followed at the nursery school.

Results from the pilot testing indicated that the instruments would provide the information necessary for purposes of the study. Additionally, the investigator discerned: 1) the interviews would require approximately two hours; 2) the interviews could best take place during the afternoons while the children were napping and directors were less pressured; 3) observations would require approximately two and one half hours; 4) observations could best occur during the morning activity time; 5) data collection could be simplified by consolidating questions on fronts of sheets rather than fronts and backs; 6) directors and

teachers preferred a phone call preceding the visit to remind them of the impending interview or observation; 7) it would be necessary to establish in advance that the purpose of the observation was to observe, not participate.

Data Collection

Data collection began on Monday, May 21, 1979, and continued through Friday, June 29, 1979 (See Appendix 6: Interview and Observation Schedule). Each director interview was conducted on the afternoon before the classroom observation at the center. Each classroom observation occurred during the children's morning activity period. Thus, data were gathered at the same time of day at each center while, it was assumed, comparable activities were taking place.

The Interviews

The investigator telephoned each director to confirm the scheduled interview prior to each visit. Upon arriving at each center, the investigator went to the director's office and introduced herself. Before beginning the interview, the investigator attempted to establish rapport by briefly reiterating the purposes of the study and by expressing appreciation for director's participation in the study. Directors were interviewed following the outline of the Director Interview Form (See Appendix 4). Each interview lasted approximately two hours. Following the

interview, the investigator confirmed with the director the classroom observation scheduled for the following morning in a randomly selected classroom for four-year-olds.

The Classroom Observation

The investigator arrived at each center prior to the opening class activities for four-year-olds in order to meet the teacher and reiterate the purpose of the visit: to observe not to participate. The teacher was asked to point out an unobtrusive location from which the investigator could observe. The investigator was not introduced to the children; if children asked who she was or why she was there, the teacher responded that she was "just a visitor who wanted to spend the morning with us." Without exception, teachers were receptive and cooperative. The children tended to ignore the investigator, with few exceptions (such as questions like "what are you writing?" or "are you Jennifer's mommy?"). The investigator did not engage in conversation with teachers or children.

Observations were recorded on the Classroom Observation Instrument (See Appendix 5). As soon as the class assembled, the investigator recorded appropriate demographic information. The investigator recorded each observed occurrence of any of the 26 curricular areas and activities listed on page two of the instrument. The observations took place during approximately two and one half hours of the morning activity time at the centers.

Following the interviews and observations, the investigator sent notes of appreciation to participants and indicated an approximate date for providing each center with feedback about the study.

Data Analyses

Data from this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Demographic data collected from the Director Interview Form were grouped and discussed in narrative form; these data included information about race, sex, tenure of directors, types of centers and their enrollments, class groupings, sources of funding. Differences between day nursery and nursery school directors' rankings of curriculum priorities were determined by t-tests between their mean ranks. Associations between directors' expressed curriculum priorities and instructional practices were determined by the use of a Pearson Correlation Coefficient. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to test the correlation between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their cognitive emphasis. The next chapter presents the data and provides an analysis.

CHAPTER FOUR ANALYSES OF THE DATA

The purposes of this study were to ascertain the expressed curriculum priorities of selected Pinellas County, Florida, day nursery and nursery school directors; to determine the association between expressed curriculum priorities and daily activities at the centers; and to ascertain the differences between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills. According to State Law (Chapter 61-2681), a day nursery provides shelter, food, rest, care, and training for children aged two to six; however, the law defines a nursery school as a children's center which offers an educational program of directed, organized play and training at the level of the child's growth and development and provides food, shelter, rest, and care.

Data for this study were collected through interviews with children's center directors and observations within the classrooms for four-year-old children. In this chapter, summaries of data gathered during the interviews and classroom observations are presented. Descriptive data are analyzed in terms of the questions the study addressed.

Summary of Director Interviews

The data gathered using the Director Interview Form are summarized in this section, following the same sequence in which questions were asked of directors by the investigator (See Appendix 4, Director Interview Form). Directors were interviewed during the afternoon sessions at their centers because it was found (during pilot testing) that they were least likely to be interrupted at those times. All sampled directors were agreeable to being interviewed for the study. At the beginning of each interview, the investigator established rapport with the directors, reiterated the purpose of the study, and indicated approximate dates for sharing findings with participating directors. Directors were assured that their responses would be treated confidentially. In concluding each interview, the investigator asked directors to remind teachers of the observations scheduled for the following morning.

Center Directors and Teachers: Race, Sex, and Tenure

Seventeen of the 20 sampled center directors were white females. One white male directed a day nursery; one black female directed a day nursery and one a nursery school. The directors of day nurseries ranged in length of time in position from .3 to 12 years; at nursery schools the range was from .8 to 12 years. The mean time in service for day nursery directors was 3.6 years, for nursery school directors 5 years.

Eighty percent of the day nursery directors were employed in that capacity for fewer than or equal to four years; sixty percent of the nursery school directors had occupied their positions for four years or less. All of the twenty teachers were females; only three were black.

Types of Centers

Eight day nurseries in the sample were independently owned and operated, two of those as part of a franchise. Two day nurseries were operated using public funds. Four nursery schools were independently owned, five were church-related and one was publicly funded.

Enrollment Capacity/Current Enrollment

The enrollment capacities of sampled day nurseries ranged from 35 children to 120 children. All day nurseries, with the exception of one center which could enroll 120 children, were operating within ten children of capacity enrollment.

Nursery schools in the sample ranged in capacities from 25 to 160; all of these centers were enrolled to within 15 children of capacity attendance. Some centers reflected more than capacity on their rolls because of flexible scheduling which allowed some children to attend Tuesdays and Thursdays, others on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

The two smallest day nurseries were publicly funded; the smallest nursery school was publicly funded. Directors at three centers expressed concern about maintaining

enrollment capacity because their financial support was based upon number of children in attendance.

Ages Served

Nine of the ten day nurseries in the sample served children aged two to six. One of the two publicly funded day nurseries in the sample served only three- and four-year-old children.

Four out of ten nursery schools served children from two to six years of age; the remaining six nursery schools in the sample served only three- and four-year-old children.

Class Groupings and How They Were Determined

Six directors of day nurseries responded that they determined class assignment by age and that their schools had a different classroom for each age group. Four day nursery directors indicated that they considered other criteria in addition to age when placing a child in a particular group, such as ability and developmental level.

All of the directors of nursery schools responded that they considered age first when placing a child in a particular group; four of these directors said they considered other factors besides age when placing a child and that they were flexible with groupings so that children could move up when the time was appropriate.

Sessions: Full Day and Half Day

All of the day nurseries comprising the sample operated full day sessions. Two of the day nurseries opened at 6:30 AM; the remainder opened at 7:00 AM or 7:30 AM. Half of the centers closed at 5:30 PM; the remainder closed at 6:30 PM.

Three of the nursery schools offered full day sessions; four offered either full day or half day sessions; three offered only half day sessions. The three half-day-only nursery schools were open from 9:00 AM until 12:00 PM daily. Other nursery schools in the sample opened at approximately 7:00 AM and closed at 6:00 PM.

Socioeconomic Status of Parents

Center directors were asked to indicate the range of incomes represented by the families of children in attendance at their centers: ---poverty---low---middle---upper. None of the day nursery directors reported families from the "upper" range alone; however, two nursery school directors indicated that they only had children representing the upper income level. Only centers operating with public funds indicated that they had "poverty" level children in attendance. Church-related nursery schools, according to the directors, were attended by middle-income or upper income families. Independent centers were attended by children from low, middle and upper income families.

Tuition

All of the day nurseries in the sample except for the two publicly funded centers charged a weekly tuition plus registration fees. Fees ranged from a low of \$24.00 per week (without lunch) to a high of \$30.00 per week. Registration fees ranged from \$10.00 to \$25.00 in addition to tuition costs. All day nurseries operated full-day sessions. The highest fees were charged by one of the publicly funded centers and both of the independent/franchise centers.

The director of the publicly funded nursery school reported that students were not charged a fee; rather, the United Way and governmental agencies paid tuition for all enrolled students. Half day nursery schools charged \$10.00 to \$15.00 weekly; they reported the highest registration fees in the sample. Full day nursery school programs ranged in cost from a low of \$23.00 plus \$25.00 registration fee to a high of \$30.00. The publicly funded center and one independent center charged no registration fees; all others charged from \$10.00 to \$30.00.

The mean weekly tuition of full day sessions for both day nurseries and nursery schools equaled approximately \$27.00. The mean registration fee for day nurseries equaled \$15.62; the mean for full day nursery school programs was \$20.87.

Philosophy of the Center

Directors were asked if they had written statements of philosophy or goals. Six day nursery directors and five nursery school directors replied that they did possess such documents. All directors were asked to summarize these statements for the investigator (See Tables 1 and 2).

Nine of the eleven day nursery and nursery school directors with written philosophy statements indicated that their teachers did not participate in the preparation of the written statement of philosophy.

Both types of centers used similar approaches in making new teachers aware of the schools' philosophies, such as modeling, staff meetings, detailed handbooks, interview procedures. Parents were made aware of the schools' philosophies through meetings, the initial interview prior to enrollment, through parents' handbooks or during calls or visits. Two day nursery directors indicated that parents were not made aware of the school's philosophy.

One day nursery director and one nursery school director indicated that their philosophies were reviewed and revised annually. No other directors indicated that the philosophies were discussed, reviewed or revised.

TABLE 1
DAY NURSERY DIRECTORS' SUMMARY OF PHILOSOPHY

- # 1 "we try to maintain a place for preschool children which trains social, physical, and emotional development"
- # 2 "the basic needs must be met, such as security love, safe environment, and emotional-social skills"
- # 3 "instructional program where children are given the opportunity to express themselves in a variety of ways; individualized instruction giving each child what he needs"
- # 4 "to prepare children for school and life so that they won't be inferior in any areas; also provide love and care, give them the feeling that they're wanted"
- # 5 "try to provide a broad range of academics, socialization, interaction between children"
- # 6 "learn how to socialize with one another, feel self-confident; we make every endeavor to praise, build them up, encourage trust"
- # 7 "parents expect children to learn too much; children should learn to get along with other children; learn simple rules"
- # 8 "first and foremost, to have a happy child who feels good about being here, feels loved, feels good about self"
- # 9 "foremost to know he's loved; with love will come security, learning, appreciation"
- #10 "we strive for activities and events appropriate for the developmental level of children; social learning is critical, especially with the number of hours they're here; should be in a supportive environment, accept discipline"

TABLE 2
NURSERY SCHOOL DIRECTORS' SUMMARY OF PHILOSOPHY

- # 1 "children and teachers need to feel it's a warm, caring place where they can grow and learn"
- # 2 "it makes me happiest to see a happy child who has learned to get along with other boys and girls"
- # 3 "help each child develop to his fullest potential in motor coordination, sensory perception, language skills, problem solving, and daily living skills; help each child become a productive, healthy and self-motivated individual who is happy and secure with a positive self-image and feeling and belonging"
- # 4 "children are individuals and should be respected and loved as individuals; they should be given choices and made to feel secure and loved"
- # 5 "provide a variety of experiences through a flexible program sensitive to growth and individual needs of each child; through his progress each child will be able to develop mentally, physically, emotionally, and socially at his own level"
- # 6 "saturate the classroom with lots of information for them to soak up; instill respect for learning, selves, and surroundings"
- # 7 "developmental learning program; we teach by the environment we create and the experiences that we offer"
- # 8 "to develop the child as a learner"
- # 9 "to prepare children for school and life in a well-rounded way"
- #10 "we're a developmental school; our main aim is to provide an atmosphere of security for children where they can develop at a comfortable pace within areas of growth each needs to get along with peers and adults"

Functions of the Center

Directors were asked to indicate if their centers' primary function were "child care, readiness for school or child development," but some directors were unable to identify a single function as primary. (The verbatim responses of directors in the sample are presented in Appendices 7 and 8.) A summary of directors' responses is presented in Table 3 below. Although several centers fell into more than one category, most directors of both day nurseries and nursery schools indicated that their primary functions were child care and child development.

TABLE 3
FUNCTIONS OF THE CENTERS

	<u>Day Nurseries</u>	<u>Nursery Schools</u>
Child Care	7	6
Child Development	7	5
School Readiness	1	1
Social Development	0	2
Development of Aspects of Self: self- awareness, posi- tive outlook	0	2

Evaluation Procedures

Three day nursery directors and one nursery school director indicated that no program evaluation occurred at their centers; however, none of the remaining directors

were able to describe any systematic means by which evaluation took place. In fact, program evaluation did not occur on a regular basis at any of the centers. Evaluation, when it did occur, was conducted by a variety of individuals or agencies as presented in Table 4.

TABLE 4
PROGRAM EVALUATION PROCEDURES

	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Pinellas County License Board	5	3
Director	3	4
Staff	2	4
Funding or Sponsoring Agency	2	1
Owner	2	0
Parents	0	1
Evaluation Occurs, but no identified process	0	6
None	3	1

Evaluation of Student Growth

In general, directors of both day nurseries and nursery schools believed that systematic evaluation of student progress was neglected in their programs. Most directors indicated that evaluation was informal and subjective; two day nursery and four nursery school directors indicated students

were not evaluated at all at their centers. "Teacher observation" was the most prevalent procedure for evaluating student progress.

TABLE 5
EVALUATION OF STUDENT PROGRESS

<u>Procedure</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Parent Observation	1	0
Teacher Observation	6	7
Use of Tests	3	1
None	2	4

Procedures for Reporting to Parents

Directors of day nurseries and nursery schools reported comparable procedures for reporting to parents. Three day nursery directors and two nursery school directors responded that no reporting was done to parents. All those indicating some type and incidence of reporting noted that it occurred as necessary rather than on a regular basis.

TABLE 6
REPORTING TO PARENTS

<u>Procedures</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Conferences	2	5
Informal contacts with parents	3	3
Written reports	4	1
Home Visits	0	1
Newsletter	0	1
None	3	2

Extent of Parent Participation

The lack of parent participation reported by all of the directors in the sample resembled data from previous studies (Bronfenbrenner, 1978; Goodlad, Klein and Novotney, 1973; Neugebauer, 1975). While it is true that many children in children's centers have parents who work and cannot participate in center activity, it also appeared that few centers made deliberate and regular efforts to involve parents in meaningful ways. Only five directors of the total sample indicated that they encouraged parent participation. Fourteen indicated that "limited voluntary participation" occurred or none at all. Day nursery and nursery school directors expressed similar views on parent participation.

TABLE 7
PARENT PARTICIPATION

<u>Type of participation</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Very limited; voluntary	4	4
Encouraged	3	2
Discouraged	0	1
None	3	3

Types of Parent Meetings

Half of the day nursery directors indicated that they did not conduct any type of parent meeting; several indicated that they had done so in the past, but the number of teachers in attendance always exceeded the number of parents. Only one director of a nursery school indicated that she did not hold parent meetings. Directors indicated that of the types of meetings conducted for parents, the most frequently occurring was an "orientation meeting" at the beginning of the year. Class programs, in which the children participated, were indicated by seventy percent of the nursery school directors. Only three directors of the total sample reported that meetings were held to disseminate child-oriented information to parents or to involve them in child-oriented discussion.

TABLE 8
TYPES OF PARENT MEETINGS

<u>Type</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Orientation	4	6
Class Programs	2	7
Discussion Groups	1	2
Parent Organization	2	0
None	5	1

Professional Preparation of Directors and Teachers

Directors of day nurseries and nursery schools in the sample possessed comparable preparation for their roles, although more day nursery directors had attended "some college" than nursery school directors. Teachers at both types of schools also represented similar educational backgrounds. Both directors and teachers had similar educational backgrounds to those surveyed in the National Day Care Study (Ruopp, 1979).

TABLE 9
PROFESSIONAL PREPARATION OF DIRECTORS AND TEACHERS

<u>Level</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>		<u>Nursery School</u>	
	<u>Director</u>	<u>Teacher</u>	<u>Director</u>	<u>Teacher</u>
High School Graduate	10	10	10	10
Some College	4	8	2	8
College Degree	4	1	5	1
Graduate Degree	2	1	3	1
Formal Training in Early Childhood	10	10	10	10

Problems of the Center

Reflecting data from previous studies (Goodlad, Klein and Novotney, 1973; Neugebauer, 1975), none of the sampled children's center directors referred to aspects of the curriculum or curriculum planning as "problems." The most often cited problem was lack of funds; a related problem, low salaries, was cited by fifty percent of the total sample. It appeared that few center directors have been challenged or invigorated by the ferment and experimentation in early childhood education; none expressed the frustration of failed expectations or "trying to do better." Such professional and intellectual isolation has been reported in other studies of early childhood programs.

TABLE 10
PROBLEMS OF THE CENTER

<u>Problem Area</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Lack of funds	5	3
Low salaries	3	2
Parents	2	2
Staff	1	1
Discipline	1	1
Preparation for school	1	0
Academic pressure	0	1
Low enrollment	0	1
Federal Government regulations	0	2
Maintenance	0	2
None	3	0

Unique or Successful Aspects of the Center

Center directors referred to affective characteristics of their programs when citing unique or successful aspects. Very few responded in terms of the degree of success with which they were meeting their program goals. A majority noted that their school's "general atmosphere" was the most successful aspect; interactions with children and quality of staff relations were also cited frequently. None alluded to satisfaction with children's growth and

development or to relationships with parents. Almost without exception, when directors were asked to enumerate successful aspects of their programs, they were startled and seemed at a loss for words; most found it difficult to focus on successful attributes worthy of reporting.

TABLE 11
UNIQUE OR SUCCESSFUL ASPECTS OF THE CENTER

<u>Area</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
General Atmosphere	3	3
Treatment of Children	2	2
Success with Children	2	1
Program Emphases	2	1
Staff Relationships	1	2
Socioeconomic, Ethnic, Racial Integration	2	0
Staff Qualifications	1	1
Facility	1	1
Funding	1	0
Food	1	0
Reputation	0	1
Nothing	0	1

Summary of Classroom Observations

The classroom observations were conducted during the morning sessions (between 8:30 AM and 11:30 AM) at the sampled centers. The investigator reminded teachers of the impending visit on the afternoon before it occurred. Usually, after the investigator introduced herself, the teachers assisted her in finding a place from which to observe and then gave their full attention to the children rather than engaging in any discussion with the investigator.

First, the investigator recorded the name of the school, the date of the observation, and the teacher's name and race on the Classroom Observation Instrument (See Appendix 9 for an example of a completed observation instrument). Then, descriptive data were recorded, such as the number of boys and girls and their racial composition. Throughout each observation, the investigator recorded impressions of classroom activities. Following the guidelines provided by page two of the observation instrument, the investigator tallied each time individual children, groups of children, or the entire class engaged in any of the listed areas and activities, with the purpose of documenting the presence or absence of each kind of activity throughout the observation.

Activities in which the children engaged without direct supervision or instruction from their teachers were recorded as "informal." For example, playing with numbered

cubes, geometric shapes, or other manipulatives was recorded as "informal arithmetic," while receiving direct instruction from the teachers, such as "one ball plus one ball equals two balls," was recorded as "formal arithmetic." When individual children or groups of children were observed playing with magnets at the science table, it was recorded as "informal science"; however, when the teacher instructed the children about magnetic attraction, it was recorded as "formal science." Data from the classroom observations are presented in the following pages.

Class Distribution by Race and Sex

According to the 1970 Census, 8.5 percent of the population of Pinellas County, Florida, was black; in 1979 (when the data were collected for this study) very few black children were observed in classrooms for four-year-old children at centers comprising the sample. Almost all of the black children were observed at the three publicly funded centers included in the sample (See Table 12 on the following page).

Of the 178 children observed in the ten day nursery classrooms, 30 were black; of the 30 black children observed, 26 were observed at the two publicly funded day nurseries. No black children were observed in classrooms for four-year-olds at six of the sampled day nurseries.

An even smaller number of black children were observed at nursery schools. Of the 167 children observed in classrooms for four-year-olds at nursery schools, 12 children were black; of the 12 black children, 11 were enrolled at the one publicly funded nursery school in the sample. No black children were observed in classrooms for four-year-olds at eight of the sampled nursery schools.

Approximately even numbers of males and females were enrolled at all the sampled centers.

TABLE 12
CLASS DISTRIBUTION BY RACE AND SEX AT
TYPES OF CENTERS OBSERVED

	<u>Day Nurseries</u>					<u>Nursery Schools</u>			
	<u>BM</u>	<u>BF</u>	<u>WM</u>	<u>WF</u>		<u>BM</u>	<u>BF</u>	<u>WM</u>	<u>WF</u>
P U B L I C									
# 1	4	8	3	2	# 1	5	6	0	1
# 2	7	7	0	0					
.....									
I N D E P E N D E N T									
# 1	0	0	8	3	# 1	0	0	5	10
# 2	0	0	9	6	# 2	1	0	16	13
# 3	0	0	21	16	# 3	0	0	6	12
# 4	1	0	3	7	# 4	0	0	12	5
# 5	2	1	14	14					
# 6	0	0	8	8					
.....									
F R A N C I S E									
# 1	0	0	6	5					
# 2	0	0	8	7					
.....									
C H R I S T I A N									
# 1					# 1	0	0	6	13
# 2					# 2	0	0	6	6
# 3					# 3	0	0	10	7
# 4					# 4	0	0	4	13
# 5					# 5	0	0	6	4
	<u>BM</u>	<u>BF</u>	<u>WM</u>	<u>WF</u>		<u>BM</u>	<u>BF</u>	<u>WM</u>	<u>WF</u>
TOTALS:	14	16	80	68 = 178		6	6	71	84 = 167

Teacher:Pupil Ratio

Licensing standards in Pinellas County mandate that the teacher:pupil ratio for four-year-olds be no more than 1:20. None of the centers in the sample violated this requirement; however, according to Ruopp (1979) "the most powerful element of classroom composition for quality is absolute group size: the total number of children for whom one or more caregivers is responsible (p. xxvii). Differences in group size were found (in the Ruopp study) to relate only slightly to differences in cost. Smaller groups were associated with better care. Ruopp suggested that in a classroom where the ratio is 2:30, there is a mathematical ratio of one caregiver to every 15 children; however, there is a human ratio of 1:30--each teacher must relate to and interact with all 30 pupils, not just 15 pupils.

Two day nurseries in the sample were organized with classrooms of more than 30 children per two teachers. One independent center housed 37 children in one room with two teachers. One nursery school was found to have a 2:30 ratio (See Table 13 on the following page).

TABLE 13
TEACHER:PUPIL RATIO BY TYPE OF CENTER

<u>Day Nurseries</u>			<u>Nursery Schools</u>		
P U B L I C	# 1	2:17	# 1	1:12	
	# 2	1:14			
.....					
I N D E P E N D E N T	# 1	1:11	# 1	2:15	
	# 2	2:15	# 2	2:30	
	# 3	2:37	# 3	1:18	
	# 4	1:11	# 4	1:17	
	# 5	2:31			
	# 6	1:16			
.....					
F R A N C H I S E	# 1	2:11			
	# 2	1:15			
.....					
C H R U R C A H T E D			# 1	2:19	
			# 2	2:12	
			# 3	2:17	
			# 4	2:17	
			# 5	1:10	
.....					

Classroom Observations at Day Nurseries

At the ten day nurseries comprising the sample, children were, for the most part, instructed in groups rather than free to move around the classroom selecting their own activities. Formal instruction was given in some areas. For example, at four day nurseries children were given group instruction in arithmetic principles such as sets and numeration. At two day nurseries, the children were given group instruction in manuscript writing; for approximately 30 minutes they sat at desks and were required to copy letters off the board and practice writing their names. At the five day nurseries where art activities were observed, children re-created the teacher's art work rather than creating their own originals. Only at one day nursery were children observed to engage in dramatization and role-play. Very few or no instances of cooking, foreign language, music, rhythms, or story time were observed at the day nurseries. Table 14 presents the types of activities observed at each of the day nurseries.

TABLE 14
SUMMARY OF OBSERVED CURRICULAR AREAS AND ACTIVITIES
AT DAY NURSERIES

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	TOTAL
Arithmetic: Informal	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	4
Formal	+	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	+	4
Art	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	+	5
Foreign Language	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Language: Informal	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	1
Formal	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	2
Music: Informal	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	1
Formal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Reading Readiness	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	-	-	-	6
Reading	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Science: Informal	+	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	-	4
Formal	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	1
Social Studies: Informal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Formal	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	1
Blocks	+	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	6
Carpentry	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Circle Time	+	+	-	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	6
Cooking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Dramatization/Role-playing	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Group Games (organized)	-	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	2
Informal Rest	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	1
Naps	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Nature Walks	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Outdoor Play	-	-	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	-	6
Rhythms	+	-	+	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Story Time	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Total Number of Activities Observed	8	7	4	9	9	2	11	1	4	2	70

Classroom Observations at Nursery Schools

The number and types of activities observed at nursery schools in the sample were remarkably similar to those observed at day nurseries. At the nursery schools, however, children were more often engaged in activities independent of the teacher than children observed at day nurseries. Fewer instances of formal instruction in specific areas were observed at nursery schools; for example, formal instruction in arithmetic was observed only at one nursery school. Art activities occurred at nine of the nursery schools and children created original art work, independent of teacher direction, often using self-selected rather than teacher-suggested materials. At seven nursery schools teachers read and discussed stories with the children; often children brought books from home which they asked teachers to read to the class. More instances of musical activities were observed at nursery schools. No instances of foreign language teaching were observed. Table 15 presents the summary of the activities observed at nursery schools.

TABLE 15
SUMMARY OF OBSERVED CURRICULAR AREAS AND ACTIVITIES
AT NURSERY SCHOOLS

	#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	TOTAL
Arithmetic: Informal	-	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	+	-	3
Formal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	1
Art	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	+	+	+	9
Foreign Language	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Language: Informal	+	-	-	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	3
Formal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Music:	-	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	5
Informal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Formal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Reading Readiness	-	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	-	5
Reading	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Science:	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	-	+	-	5
Informal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Formal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Social Studies: Informal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Formal	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Blocks	+	-	+	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	5
Carpentry	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	1
Circle Time	-	+	-	-	+	+	-	+	-	+	5
Cooking	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	1
Dramatization/Role-playing	-	-	-	+	-	+	-	-	+	-	3
Group Games (organized)	-	+	-	+	+	+	-	-	+	+	4
Informal Rest	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Naps	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	2
Nature Walks	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	+	-	-	1
Outdoor Play	+	-	-	+	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Rhythms	-	-	-	+	+	-	-	-	+	+	4
Story Time	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	-	-	-	7
Total Number Activities Observed	6	7	5	10	8	7	5	4	8	6	

Analyses of the Research Questions

Question #1--What were the expressed curriculum priorities of day nursery and nursery school directors in the sample?

Directors were asked to rank-order their curriculum priorities for four-year-olds, from most important (1) to least important (11) of eleven curricular areas. In assigning priority to eleven curricular areas in classrooms for four-year-old children, the total sample of children's center directors ranked affective, motor and cognitive areas similarly (See Table 16). Both day nursery directors and nursery school directors accorded the highest priority to three affective areas: emotional development, social-interpersonal skills, and verbalizing feelings. Nursery school directors accorded slightly higher importance (lower mean rank) to "social-interpersonal skills." All day nursery directors ranked "emotional development" most important ("1"). Directors of nursery schools assigned slightly higher priority (lower mean rank) to the motor areas, but directors as a group expressed medium-range priorities for motor-related curricular areas. Directors in the total sample accorded the three cognitive areas lowest priority; directors of day nurseries accorded a slightly higher priority (lower mean rank) to "academic skills" than did nursery school directors.

TABLE 16
CATEGORIES OF EXPRESSED CURRICULUM PRIORITIES
AFFECT, MOTOR, AND COGNITION

	<u>Priority Area</u>	<u>Day Nursery Rank/Mean</u>	<u>Nursery School Rank/Mean</u>
A	Emotional Development	1 (1.0)	1 (1.6)
F			
F	Social Interpersonal	2 (3.7)	2 (3.1)
E			
C	Verbalizing Feelings	3 (4.1)	3 (4.1)
T			
.....			
	Sensory Awareness	4 (6.1)	4 (5.6)
M			
O	Sensory Motor	5 (6.1)	5 (5.7)
T			
O	Language Skills	6 (6.2)	6 (6.2)
R			
	Motor Skills	7 (6.5)	7 (6.4)
	Art/Creative Expression	8 (7.1)	8 (7.4)
.....			
C			
O			
G	Cognitive/Intellectual	9 (7.7)	9 (7.9)
N			
I	Concept Acquisition	10 (7.7)	10 (7.9)
T			
I	Academic Skills	11 (9.8)	11 (10.7)
O			
N			
.....			

Question #2--Were there differences in expressed priorities between and among the directors of the two types of children's centers which comprised the sample: day nurseries and nursery schools?

The investigator conducted t-tests for the two independent samples to determine whether the means for the two groups differed significantly. It was found that there were no significant differences between the ranked priorities expressed by directors of day nurseries and nursery schools ($t(18) = + 2.101, p < .05$). Although Pinellas County License Board standards distinguish between day nurseries and nursery schools regarding the educational programs provided, the directors of nursery schools failed to express curriculum priorities which differed from those of day nursery directors. In fact, the rankings from the mean scores were identical. Like day nursery directors, nursery school directors accorded highest priority to "emotional development," lowest to "concept acquisition" and "academic skills."

Question #3--Was there an association between directors' expressed curriculum priorities for daily activities and their occurrence during classroom observations?

During their interviews, directors were asked to indicate the frequency with which 26 curricular areas and activities (identified on the Director Interview Form and the Classroom Observation Instrument) occurred in their programs, "daily, frequently, occasionally, rarely or never." Those items which they indicated were "daily" occurrences were then compared to the activities which the investigator observed during classroom visits (See Table 17). A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to test the significance of the correlation between directors' expressed curriculum priorities for daily activities and their actual occurrence. A significant association was found to exist both between day nursery and nursery school directors' expressed priorities and daily activities at the centers (day nurseries: $r=.738$; $t=5.28$; $p<.05$; nursery schools: $r=.789$; $t=6.14$; $p<.05$).

TABLE 17
ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN DIRECTORS' EXPRESSED CURRICULUM
PRIORITIES AND THEIR DAILY OCCURRENCE

Curricular Area or Activity	Day Nursery		Nursery School	
	Expressed	Observed	Expressed	Observed
Arithmetic:				
Informal	6	4	8	3
Formal	2	4	2	1
Art	9	5	10	9
Foreign Language	0	0	0	0
Language:				
Informal	9	1	10	3
Formal	2	2	2	0
Music:				
Informal	4	1	7	5
Formal	1	0	0	0
Reading Readiness	8	6	10	5
Reading	3	0	3	1
Science:				
Informal	5	4	3	5
Formal	1	1	0	0
Social Studies:				
Informal	5	0	3	0
Formal	2	1	0	0
Blocks	9	6	10	5
Carpentry	0	0	1	1
Circle Time	9	6	9	5
Cooking	0	1	0	1
Dramatization/ Role-play	1	1	4	3
Group Games (Organized)	2	2	4	4
Informal Rest	2	1	2	0
*Naps	10	0	10	2
Nature Walks	0	1	1	1
Outdoor Play	10	6	10	2
Rhythms	2	2	7	4
Story Time	6	1	10	7
<hr/>				
	$r=.738; t=5.28; p<.05$		$r=.789; t=6.14; p<.05$	

* Naps were not included in the calculations since the investigator observed in classrooms only during morning activity times when children generally did not nap.

Question #4--Was there an association between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills?

Directors were asked to indicate the frequency with which certain curricular areas and activities occurred on a daily basis in classrooms for four-year-olds at their centers. Directors of day nurseries and nursery schools were compared in terms of the frequencies they expressed regarding the ten cognitively-based curricular areas (See Table 18). In order to test the significance of the correlation between day nursery and nursery school directors in terms of their cognitive emphases, a Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used. The association was found to be significant ($r=.94$; $t=7.67$; $p<.05$). Although the Pinellas County License Board distinguishes day nurseries and nursery schools on the basis of their cognitive emphases, the two types of children's centers were found to be remarkably similar in terms of their cognitive emphases.

TABLE 18
 ASSOCIATIONS BETWEEN DAY NURSERY AND NURSERY SCHOOL
 DIRECTORS' EXPRESSED CURRICULUM PRIORITIES

<u>Curricular Area</u> <u>or Activity</u>	<u>Day Nursery</u>	<u>Nursery School</u>
Arithmetic:		
Informal	6	8
Formal	2	2
Language:		
Informal	9	10
Formal	2	2
Reading Readiness	8	10
Reading	3	3
Science:		
Informal	5	3
Formal	1	0
Social Studies:		
Informal	5	3
Formal	2	0
<hr/>		
	$r = .94; t = 7.67; p < .05$	

CHAPTER FIVE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Exploratory field studies, such as this one, examine the relations and interactions of variables in real social structures. One purpose of such studies is to lay the ground work for later, more systematic and rigorous testing of hypotheses. In this chapter, first the research questions posed by the investigator are reiterated. Then, the findings of the study are presented and discussed in relation to questions and recommendations for further study.

Research Questions

Interviews with the directors of 20 children's centers and observations in classrooms for four-year-olds at their centers were conducted to find answers to the following four research questions addressed by the study:

Question #1--What were the expressed curriculum priorities of directors of day nurseries and nursery schools in the sample?

Question #2--Were there differences in expressed curriculum priorities between and among the directors of the two types

of children's centers which comprised the sample: day nurseries and nursery schools?

Question #3--Was there an association between directors' expressed curriculum priorities for daily activities and their occurrence during the classroom observations?

Question #4--Was there an association between day nurseries and nursery schools in terms of their emphasis on cognitive skills?

Findings

Directors of Pinellas County day nurseries and nursery schools comprising the sample expressed remarkably similar curriculum priorities. In rank ordering 11 curricular areas from most important (1) to least important (11) in terms of their priorities for classrooms for four-year-old children at their centers, both day nursery and nursery school directors accorded highest priority to affective areas (emotional development, social-interpersonal, verbalizing feelings). Directors indicated medium-range priority for motor areas (sensory awareness, sensory-motor skills, language skills, motor skills, arts and creative expression) and lowest for cognitive areas (cognitive/intellectual, concept acquisition, academic skills). It was found that

there were no significant differences between the ranked priorities of day nursery and nursery school directors ($t(18) = \pm 2.101, p < .05$).

Since affective goals were given highest priority and listed as the most unique and successful aspect of their centers by a majority of directors, future studies might examine the processes by which they achieve these goals as well as how they measure their success in attaining them.

It was found that both day nursery and nursery school directors expressed curriculum priorities which were significantly associated with actual daily occurrences (as determined through comparing their expressed priorities with observed activities during classroom visits) at their centers (day nurseries: $r = .738; t = 5.28; p < .05$; nursery schools: $r = .789; t = 6.14; p < .05$).

Although the Pinellas County License Board implements a licensing policy which, in accordance with State Law, distinguishes between day nurseries and nursery schools by identifying nursery schools with offering an educational program, interviews with directors indicated that they had similar expectations for the daily occurrences of ten cognitively-based activities (See Table 18). A Pearson Correlation Coefficient was used to test the significance of the correlation between day nursery and nursery school directors' expressions regarding the daily occurrence of the ten areas; the association was found to be significant ($r = .94; t = 7.67; p < .05$).

Given current knowledge about the malleability of the young child's mind and the potential impact of early schooling on cognitive development (Bloom, 1964; Bruner, 1960), it is curious that all directors participating in this study accorded such low priority to cognitive areas.

The importance of children's affective growth as well as their cognitive growth is recognized; however, nursery schools in Pinellas County claim to provide an educational environment with a cognitive emphasis. Further study is necessary to determine if the centers in this study were atypical in not fulfilling this aspect of their roles and to determine if day nurseries are assuming the functions assigned to nursery schools.

Several directors interviewed for this study objected to public school expectations for entering kindergarten children. These directors asserted that five-year-olds entering school are now expected to have attained competence with the alphabet and their numbers--especially if they attended a preschool. The investigator speculated that such expectations might be the result of the "Educational Accountability Act of 1976," which mandated minimum standards and proficiency levels for public school students. Is it possible that children's centers are focusing on affective goals in reaction to these accelerated standards to "inoculate" children for the later demands of school life? Both the public schools and children's centers would profit from greater communication about their

programs, expectations and priorities. The findings in response to the research questions addressed by this study revealed that day nursery and nursery school programs were remarkably similar. In terms of their demographic characteristics, the centers were also homogeneous. The following section discusses these data.

Recommendations

The children observed in sampled classrooms were predominantly white middle-income children. Only at the three publicly funded centers were poverty-level black children represented. No black children were observed in classrooms for four-year-old children at 14 of the 20 sampled centers.

Only three publicly funded centers were included in the sample: therefore, any generalizations about practices at publicly funded centers are merely suggestive rather than definitive. The investigator concluded, on the basis of the data collected at the three publicly funded centers, that their programs were not comparable to those offered at private centers in terms of the available materials, learning environments, or social-emotional climate. Nonetheless, these centers operated with budgets comparable to other sampled centers and the professional preparation of directors and teachers at public centers was comparable to that of directors and teachers at private centers. Studies of publicly funded centers in this county may be needed to ascertain whether or not the centers observed in this study

are typical or atypical. Such studies could examine program variables such as learning climate and discipline or reinforcement techniques at these centers.

Public and private centers could be compared in terms of their cognitive emphases, the availability of appropriate and varied learning materials, and skilled instruction. A study could be designed which involved randomly selecting an experimental group of children from those attending public centers in the county. This experimental group would be matched with a randomly selected control group. The experimental group would attend private centers in the county; the control group of children would continue to attend the publicly funded centers. The following hypothesis could be tested: There are no differences in student growth between students attending publicly funded centers and those attending private centers in terms of affective and cognitive measures. The results of such a study might make possible the recommendation that federal and state monies be used to improve public centers or to provide low-income children with the opportunity to attend private preschools.

Directors were asked to summarize their statements of philosophy. These statements reinforced the similarities between and among day nurseries and nursery schools which were found in the analyses of the research questions for the study. Additionally, in describing the functions of their centers day nursery and nursery school directors

were alike in indicating their primary functions were child development and child care.

Bronfenbrenner (1976b) asserted that child care programs should be described (including statements about goals and objectives, as well as discipline techniques) in written materials and talks which are made available to parents. Of the children's centers comprising the sample for this study, however, only fifty percent indicated they had written philosophy statements; only two of these with written materials indicated they were annually reviewed and revised.

Previous researchers (Goodlad, Klein and Novotney, 1973; Neugebauer, 1975) reported only limited program evaluation processes existed at the children's centers which they studied. Directors of the centers in this study indicated their dissatisfaction that program evaluation did not occur at their centers on a regular basis; directors expressed uncertainty as to how to evaluate their programs and many indicated that they simply did not have the time to undertake yet another task.

The lack of any program evaluation at the sampled centers suggests a lack of professional preparation which would enable directors and teachers to evaluate their programs. Perhaps a program evaluation component in the training program should constitute a criterion for being hired as a director in this county. Program improvement is fostered when program planners have information about the extent to which goals are being met.

Directors also expressed chagrin for neglecting to evaluate students enrolled at their centers. They indicated that student growth was evaluated informally, if at all, through teacher observation. Seventy-five percent of all directors indicated they reported to parents as necessary rather than on a regular basis. They stated that most often their reporting was related to matters of discipline rather than student growth. Perhaps teachers should be trained in observation techniques and given opportunities to learn how to use instruments to evaluate student growth as well as how to conduct parent conferences in which student growth is discussed effectively. By establishing a pattern for regular parent conferences in which teachers and parents talk meaningfully about children, sharing their observations and questions, preschool teachers can lay the groundwork for positive attitudes about such evaluation sessions during later school years.

Day nursery and nursery school directors expressed similar views in regard to parent participation. While it is true that many children in centers have working parents who cannot participate in center activity, it was found that few centers made deliberate and regular efforts to involve parents in meaningful ways. Only three directors of the twenty sampled ones reported that meetings were held to disseminate child-oriented information to parents or to involve them in child-oriented discussion. The investigator speculated that such indifference to the parents'

needs, questions, and expectations might set the tone for the quality of the relationship which parents later shared with the public schools. According to Bronfenbrenner (1976b), the most neglected aspect of child care programs is parent involvement in program planning, implementation, and evaluation.

When asked if they had any problems at their centers, 13 out of 20 center directors referred to "lack of funds" or "low salaries." Directors of day nurseries and nursery schools were alike in not referring to any aspects of their curriculum as problematical.

Children's centers in Pinellas County, Florida, advertise their services on the basis of their licensing classifications; some are denoted as day nurseries, others as nursery schools. According to state law (Chapter 61-2681, Laws of Florida), a day nursery is defined as a children's center which offers an educational program of directed, organized play and training at the level of the child's growth and development in addition to providing food, shelter, rest and care. Thus, according to the law, nursery schools give greater attention to cognitive development than day nurseries.

The findings from this study, however, indicated that no such distinction in terms of cognitive emphases actually existed between day nurseries and nursery schools. Moreover, the two types of children's centers reflected astonishing similarities in terms of their demographic

characteristics. It is recommended that the Pinellas County License Board examine the procedures by which it classifies centers as day nurseries and nursery schools, for current procedures and labels may unintentionally communicate misinformation about the programs which centers offer. It is also recommended that further studies be conducted to investigate the county's preschool programs in terms of their affective and cognitive emphases and that efforts be made to improve existing programs in response to the findings of such studies.

APPENDIX 1
 LICENSED CHILDREN'S CENTERS IN NORTH REGION OF
 PINELLAS COUNTY/SAMPLED CENTERS

<u>DAY NURSERIES</u> (N=27)	<u>NURSERY SCHOOLS</u> (N=18)
Belleair Oaks	* Aldersgate
Central Pinellas	Anona
Christian	* Ascension
Community Pride	* Dixie
* Creative Care	First Christian Preschool
Dunedin Day School	First Presbyterian Church
First Methodist	Preschool
First United Methodist	The Growing Place
Grace Day	* Lakewood Preschool
Happy Times I	Largo Methodist
Happy Times II	* Oakhurst
Jack n' Jill	* Patchwork
* Kinder-Care Learning	Peace Memorial
Center	* Pilgrim
Lakeside Christian	* Pinellas Opportunity
* La Petite Academy	Council
* Li'l Rascals Preschool I	Safety Harbor Preschool
Li'l Rascals Preschool II	Temple B'Nai Israel
* Lincoln	* Trinity
* Little People's Place	* Wilhelm's
Love-N-Care	
Musicman	
* Parkview Child Develop-	
ment Center	
St. Mark Christian	
Small World	
* Sunset Hills Learning Center	
* Sunshine	
Tarpon Center	
* Town and Country	

* Sampled Centers

APPENDIX 2
LETTER TO SAMPLED DIRECTORS

Dear _____,

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study of Pinellas County children's centers. I appreciate your interest and helpfulness as we talked on the telephone last week.

Many children in our county need substitute care while their mothers work. This trend is reflected in nationwide changes in the family and increased participation of women in the work force. Through my intended study, I would like to find out what kinds of child care facilities are available in Pinellas County and the nature of curriculum planning at these centers. I hope to be able to make recommendations about future directions after examining existing conditions in our county.

I look forward to meeting you soon. As I said when we talked, I would like to interview you on _____ at _____ PM. This interview should last approximately two hours. During this time we will discuss a wide range of issues related to child care and your perceptions about directing a child care center. On the morning following the interview, I would like to observe in a classroom for four hours at your center, from opening exercise till lunch time.

All information which we discuss will remain confidential. I will provide you with a copy of my findings.

Once again, thank you. I look forward to visiting your center.

Respectfully yours,

Kathy Watson
105 21st Avenue S.E.
St. Petersburg, FL
821-2013

APPENDIX 3
LETTER OF PERMISSION

March 12, 1979

Mrs. Kathryn J. Watson, Director
Covenant Day Care Center
Covenant Presbyterian Church
4201 Sixth Street South
St. Petersburg, Florida 33705

Dear Mrs. Watson:

This letter is to grant permission for you to use and adapt the following materials copyrighted by /I/D/E/A/ in your personal doctoral study:

Nursery School Survey Form
Director Interview Form
Classroom Observation Form

We encourage the use of our copyrighted materials in studies such as yours, and are happy to permit use of them without charge. However, we would appreciate receiving an abstract or similar report of your study when it is completed.

I enjoyed my conversation with you and wish you every success as you undertake your doctoral study.

Sincerely,

John M. Bahner
Executive Director

JMB:ajc

cc: Legal Department

APPENDIX 4
DIRECTOR INTERVIEW FORM *

Name _____ School _____

Date _____ Time _____ to _____

B W M F How long have you been director of this school?

DESCRIPTIVE DATA

1. This children's center is licensed by the Pinellas County License Board as a: day nursery _____ nursery school _____
2. Type of center: Independent _____ Church-related _____ Public _____
3. Total enrollment capacity: _____ Current enrollment _____
4. Ages served: _____
5. How many different classes or groups are there? _____
6. Full day _____ Half-day _____
7. What hours is the center open daily? from _____ to _____
8. What is the range of socioeconomic status of parents?
_____ poverty _____ low _____ middle _____ upper
9. What is the primary source of funding? _____

10. What is the weekly tuition? _____
What is the registration fee? _____ Other fees? _____
_____ Do you use a sliding fee scale? _____
11. What are the director's working hours? from _____ to _____
_____ or about _____ hours a day; _____ hours a week

* Adapted from "Director Interview Form" developed by Goodlad et al., Early Schooling in the United States. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973, pp. 186-191

In your opinion, how important are the following areas to your program for fours? In other words, how much priority do you give them?

	LOW	MEDIUM	HIGH
Academic Skills (reading, writing, arithmetic)			
Arts and Creative Expression			
Cognitive-intellectual development			
Concept-acquisition (training in concepts of time, color, size)			
Emotional Development (confidence, self-esteem)			
Language Skills			
Motor Skills (large muscle)			
Sensory Awareness			
Sensory-motor Skills (visual, auditory, muscle training)			
Social-interpersonal Skills (cooperation, rules)			
Verbalizing Feelings			
Other: _____			

Do you have a written statement of philosophy or goals?

Yes _____ No _____ (May I have a copy?) Can you summarize it for me?

Did your teachers actively participate in the preparation of this written statement? Yes _____ No _____

How are new teachers made aware of it?

How are parents made aware of it?

How often is it reviewed or revised?

.....

What do you consider to be the primary function(s) of your school? (child care, readiness for school, child development . . .)

.....

Is your program evaluated? Yes _____ No _____ If so, how?

What forms of evaluation of student growth are used?

(teacher observation, standardized tests, sociometric data)

Is any reporting done by the school/teachers to parents?
(conferences, written reports, phone calls, informal talks)

If so, how often?

.....

To what extent do parents participate in the daily activities? (required, encouraged, as resources, discouraged)

Do you organize parent meetings? If so, what types? (work parties, discussion groups) How often are they held?
What is your average attendance?

TYPE	HOW OFTEN HELD	AVERAGE ATTENDANCE
<hr/>		
<hr/>		
<hr/>		

Do you attempt to obtain any information about the child and/or his family when he registers? If so, how?
(written forms, interviews, conferences)

Do you delegate administrative responsibilities to your staff? Yes _____ No _____

Examples:

CURRICULAR AREAS AND ACTIVITIES	FREQUENCY			
	DAILY	FREQUENTLY	OCCASION- ALLY	RARELY OR NEVER
Arithmetic:				
Informal				
Formal				
Art				
Foreign Language				
Language:				
Informal				
Formal				
Music: Informal				
Formal				
Reading Readiness				
Reading				
Science:				
Informal				
Formal				
Social Studies:				
Informal				
Formal				
Other:				
+++++	+++++	+++++	+++++	+++++
Blocks				
Carpentry				
Circle Time				
Dramatization and Role-playing				
Group Games (organized)				
Informal Rest				
Naps				
Nature Walks				
Outdoor Play				
Rhythms				
Story Time				
Other:				

What are the major problems or issues which your school and or teachers face?

What would you consider to be unique and/or particularly successful in your school?

APPENDIX 5
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT *

School _____ Date _____

Teacher _____ M F B W

Descriptive Data

1. Age range of group _____

2. Time period this group is in session _____

3. Number of children in group: Girls _____
Black White

Boys _____
Black White

4. Adult:child ratio _____

5. Number of aides/other personnel _____

6. Observation Time: Begin _____ End _____

* Adapted from "Classroom Observation Form" developed by Goodlad et al., Early Schooling in the United States. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973, pp. 191-201.

CURRICULUM AREAS AND ACTIVITIES

OBSERVED

Arithmetic:	
Informal	
Formal	
Art	
Foreign Language	
Language:	
Informal	
Formal	
Music:	
Informal	
Formal	
Reading Readiness	
Reading	
Science:	
Informal	
Formal	
Social Studies:	
Informal	
Formal	
Other:	
+++++	
Blocks	
Carpentry	
Circle Time	
Cooking	
Dramatization and Role-playing	
Group Games (organized)	
Informal Rest	
Naps	
Nature Walks	
Outdoor Play	
Rhythms	
Story Time	
Other:	

APPENDIX 6
INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION SCHEDULE

	Monday 21	Tuesday 22	Wednesday 23	Thursday 24	Friday 25
MAY					
Observation:		Trinity		Ascension	Wilhelm's
Interview:	Trinity		Ascension	Wilhelm's	
	28	29	30	31	1
Observation:	Holiday		Little people's	Lincoln	Little Rascals
Interview:		Little People's	Lincoln	Little Rascals	La Petite
JUNE	4	5	6	7	8
Observation:	La petite	Town and Country	Dixie	Sunset Hills	
Interview:	Town and Country	Dixie	Sunset Hills		
	11	12	13	14	15
Observation:		Patchwork	Oakhurst	Pilgrim	
Interview:	Patchwork	Oakhurst	Pilgrim		

JUNE	Monday 18	Tuesday 19	Wednesday 20	Thursday 21	Friday 22
Observation:		Lakewood	Aldersgate	Creative Care	Pinellas Opportunity Council
Interview:	Lakewood	Alders- gate	Creative Care	Pinellas Opportunity Council	
	25	26	27	28	29
Observation:		Kinder Care	Parkview	Sunshine	
Interview:	Kinder Care	Parkview	Sunshine		

APPENDIX 7
PRIMARY FUNCTIONS; DAY NURSERIES

<u>Center #</u>	<u>Directors' Statements</u>
1	"child care with development"
2	"take care of young children while parents work"
3	"ends up being day care because most parents work"
4	"child care and development; feeding the child, giving love and care"
5	"develop these children; these are their formative years; develop their motor skills, manipulative skills; good food"
6	"child care; school readiness"
7	"give children a warm place away from home where they can learn"
8	"provide children the best place for them emotionally and academically at this time in their lives"
9	"help a little child become a big child"
10	"child development"

APPENDIX 8
PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: NURSERY SCHOOLS

<u>Center #</u>	<u>Directors' Statements</u>
1	"combination social development and readiness; able to face school with a positive outlook"
2	"individual self-awareness and for child to really like himself, first and primary"
3	"provide a safe and healthy environment for children (emotionally, socially, physically, mentally)"
4	" <u>not</u> preparation for kindergarten; <u>not</u> to give children an academic head start"
5	"provide a nice, warm, caring place for children to play and learn"
6	"day care"
7	"combination: day care child development"
8	"provide care for children of working mothers"
9	"provide safe and secure place for children of working parents; provide enrichment opportunities for development"
10	"helping children to develop skills, both social and intellectual"

APPENDIX 9
CLASSROOM OBSERVATION INSTRUMENT *

School Day Nursery Date 5-30-79

Teacher _____ M ☒ P ☒ W

Descriptive Data

1. Age range of group four-year-olds
2. Time period this group is in session 7:30 AM - 5:30 PM

3. Number of children in group: Girls III III II
Black White

Boys III III
Black White

4. Adult:child ratio 2:17

5. Number of aides/other personnel 1

6. Observation Time: Begin 8:35 AM End 11:05 AM
children in block corner throwing blocks at others, sliding across floor, kicking blocks across the room (not constructing anything with blocks)

*housekeeping area and blocks too close together; children from each area interfere with each other; old games with pieces missing
choices are limited; children engage in activities as a group; some broken furniture
kind, soft-spoken teacher; many demanding children
noise level unbelievable (effect on teacher? children?)*

* Adapted from "Classroom Observation Form" developed by Goodlad et al., Early Schooling in the United States. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1973, pp. 191-201.

CURRICULAR AREAS AND ACTIVITIES

OBSERVED

Arithmetic:		
Informal		
Formal @ 33 min.		
Art	@ 30 min. whole group activities	✓ sets and one-to-one correspondence ✓ teacher demonstrated ✓ children replicated
Foreign Language		
Language:		
Informal		
Formal		
Music:		
Informal		
Formal		
Reading Readiness		✓ following oral directions
Reading		
Science: ←		
Informal		
Formal		✓ small group used magnets at table
Social Studies:		
Informal		
Formal		
Other:		
Blocks ←	@ 45 min. (high noise level)	allowed to use only on shelf top
Carpentry		
Circle Time		✓ Listening Game
Cooking		
Dramatization and Role-playing		✓ housekeeping corner
Group Games (organized)		
Informal Rest		
Naps		
Nature Walks		
Outdoor Play		
Rhythms		✓ used basketball
Story Time		
Other:	"real school" atmosphere; all children worked on same activity at same time	few manipulatives; observed many aggressive acts

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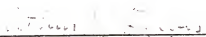
BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Kathryn Jones Watson was born in Melbourne, Florida, in 1948. She earned a B. A. degree in humanities from Florida Presbyterian College in 1969 and an M. Ed. in reading from the University of Florida in 1973.


She taught third, fourth, and fifth grades in Florida public schools and served as a teacher and researcher at the P. K. Yonge Laboratory School at the University of Florida. While at the laboratory school, she authored two monographs. The first, written with Dr. Sandra Damico, described an ecological study of peer helping relationships in a multiage elementary classroom; the second described a year-long community involvement program for fourth and fifth grade students. She served as Director of the Cooperative Curriculum Research Project involving the laboratory school and 15 Florida counties for two years. Prior to joining the Eckerd College faculty in 1979, she directed a children's center in Pinellas County, Florida.

She is married to V. Sterling Watson and has an eleven-year-old daughter, Megan Elise.


I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.


Arthur J. Lewis, Chairperson
Professor of Instructional
Leadership and Support

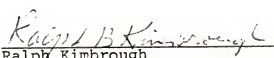
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Sandra Damico
Associate Professor of
Foundations of Education

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.


William Hedges
Professor of Instructional
Leadership and Support

I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Education.


Ralph Kimbrough
Professor of Educational
Administration and Supervision

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the Division of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education.

December 1980

Dean of Graduate Studies
and Research